

family farms, and on Main Street in small communities all across my State. That's why we need to be as generous as possible—and creative as possible—in keeping our downtowns not just alive but thriving.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I'm involved in funding many hundreds of programs every year. But the Main Street Iowa program—providing challenge grants to revitalize downtown buildings across my State—is in a class by itself. It's smart. It's effective. And it touches communities and people in very concrete ways.

For example, Aubrey Dunbar and the citizens of Adel, IA are taking strides to improve commerce and aesthetics in their downtown area. Adel's Main Street revitalization efforts received a \$45,000 Main Street Challenge Grant in 2004 to be used toward the purchase and installation of an elevator in Aubrey Dunbar's Grandeur on the Square, a three story effort containing shops and a restaurant. Mr. Dunbar kept the historic charm of the older buildings by refurbishing rather than replacing the tin ceilings, and even maintained the old Masonic symbol on one of the buildings.

The beauty of the Main Street Iowa program is that the ideas and initiatives come from our small towns and rural communities. I have been pleased to secure \$1.5 million in funding since 2002 for Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants. The Main Street programs of the Iowa Department of Economic Development help provide technical assistance, but, as we have seen in Adel, success itself comes from local leadership, local teamwork, and home-grown ideas and solutions.

Projects like the restoration of the Grandeur on the Square in Adel leverage the spirit and morale of people in our small towns and local communities. Grandeur on the Square has drawn affluent shoppers into Adel and has benefited downtown businesses. An average of 200 people now go through downtown Adel daily as a result of the shopping and dining opportunities created by Mr. Dunbar. When people see one of the anchor businesses on Main Street being renovated or expanded, this can change the whole psychology of a town or community. It offers hope. It serves as a catalyst for a far-reaching ripple effect of positive changes.

I congratulate Aubrey Dunbar and the citizens of Adel for putting together a winning proposal to secure a Main Street Challenge Grant. Their efforts to reclaim their heritage and reinvigorate their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other small towns across America, and for that, I salute them.●

#### BEDFORD, IOWA, RECLAIMING HISTORY

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, one of the greatest challenges we face—not just in Iowa but all across America—is

preserving the character and vitality of our small towns. This is about economics, but it is also about our culture and identity. After all, you won't find the heart and soul of Iowa at Wal-Mart or Home Depot out in the strip malls. No, the heart and soul of Iowa is in our family farms, and on Main Street in small communities all across my State. That's why we need to be as generous as possible—and creative as possible—in keeping our downtowns not just alive but thriving.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I'm involved in funding many hundreds of programs every year. But the Main Street Iowa program—providing challenge grants to revitalize downtown buildings across my state—is in a class by itself. It's smart. It's effective. It has a powerful multiplier effect. And it touches communities and people in very concrete ways.

For example, the citizens of Bedford, IA, have shown tremendous initiative in rescuing and restoring an important piece of their heritage, the Garland Hotel, formerly known as the Bedford House. This building and business has been a centerpiece in their downtown since 1857. The Garland Hotel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service in 1977, but it fell into disrepair and closed in 1997.

The citizens of Bedford are now determined to restore the Garland Hotel its former glory, and they are doing so with the help of a Main Street Challenge Grant. The \$40,000 Main Street grant is not only helping the Garland Hotel, it's serving as a catalyst to mobilize the community and leverage additional funding. \$260,000 has been invested by private citizens and companies to see the project through its completion. The Main Street grant itself will be used to reinstall the hotel's historic columns, second floor balcony, and the original signage on the hotel's façade.

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Projects like the restoration of the Garland Hotel in Bedford leverage the spirit and morale of people in our small towns and local communities. When people see one of the anchor businesses on Main Street being renovated or expanded, this can change the whole psy-

chology of a town or community. It sets a positive example. It offers hope. It serves as a catalyst for a far-reaching ripple effect of positive changes.

I congratulate the citizens of Bedford for putting together a winning proposal to secure a Main Street Challenge Grant. Their efforts to reclaim their heritage and reinvigorate their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other small towns across America, and for that, I salute them.●

#### WATERLOO, IOWA, REVITALIZATION

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As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am involved in funding many hundreds of programs every year. But the Main Street Iowa program—providing challenge grants to revitalize downtown buildings across my State—is in a class by itself. It is smart. It is effective, and it touches communities and people in very concrete ways.

For example, the citizens of Waterloo are in the process of reinvigorating their downtown district. With the support of a HUD challenge grant, National Trust for Historic Preservation, the city of Waterloo, and the local Main Street program, the Fowler Project in Waterloo will play a significant role in the revitalization of its central business district. Upon its completion, the project will encourage and inspire additional participation in the downtown effort, and serve as a progressive economic engine of culture, arts, and entertainment. This will support the synergy of young professionals, increase members of the creative class in the Cedar Valley, and provide an alternative commercial enterprise for the city. The Fowler Project will be an integral tool in remaking downtown Waterloo into a thriving cultural, civic, and commercial crossroads of the Midwest.

The beauty of the Main Street Iowa program is that the ideas and initiatives come from our towns and rural communities. I have been pleased to secure \$1.5 million in funding since 2002 for Main Street Iowa Challenge Grants. The Main Street programs of the Iowa Department of Economic Development help provide technical assistance, but, as we have seen in Waterloo, success itself comes from local leadership, local teamwork, and home-grown ideas and solutions.



This project is a shining example of new construction and a catalyst for future projects. When people see one of the anchors of Main Street being renovated or expanded, this can change the whole psychology of a town or community. It offers hope. It serves as a catalyst for a far-reaching ripple effect of positive changes.

So I congratulate the citizens of Waterloo for putting together a winning proposal to secure a Main Street Challenge Grant. Their efforts to reinvigorate their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other towns across America, and for that, I salute them.●

#### VALLEY JUNCTION, IOWA, INNOVATIVE EXPANSION

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For example, the citizens of Valley Junction, IA, have been working hard to make their area a true destination in central Iowa and a more vibrant community. With the help of a Main Street Iowa Challenge Grant, the Lagniappe in Valley Junction, a trendy boutique offering art, jewelry, gifts, accessories, and clothing with an emphasis on local artists is now expanding. The retail area will be expanded by approximately 1,000 square feet and will offer garden art, fountains, planters, wind chimes, and other outdoor accessories. The new addition will also add a social flare to the specialty shop with an outdoor seating area for 50 people. The second floor remodeling will allow expanded selection of wine and gourmet foods. The addition of a coffee/wine bar, featuring a beautifully preserved oak and marble bar, will provide an elegant conversation area with access to a rooftop garden. This New Orleans-style atmosphere is quite fitting for this boutique, named for the Creole term for “a little something extra”

This expansion project is mainly the brainchild of Caren Sturm, the owner of the Lagniappe. Her creative and innovative thinking serves as an inspira-

tion to the rest of Valley Junction, and the project itself will allow for expanded business hours, special events, private parties, and jazz music on a regular basis. This upwards expansion is an innovative solution to the lack of commercial space present in the Valley Junction area. It is a model for other proprietors to emulate, as demand for retail space far exceeds the availability of property. I salute Caren Sturm and the rest of Valley Junction for their hard work to maintain the status of their town as one of the best retail and downtown areas in Iowa.

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This project is a shining example of new construction and a catalyst for future projects. When people see one of the anchors of Main Street being renovated or expanded, this can change the whole psychology of a town or community. It offers hope. It serves as a catalyst for a far-reaching ripple effect of positive changes.

So I congratulate Caren Sturm and the citizens of Valley Junction for putting together a winning proposal to secure a Main Street Challenge Grant. Their efforts to reinvigorate their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other shopping districts across America, and for that, I salute them.●

#### STORY CITY, IOWA, DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT

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For example, the citizens of Story City, IA, and the editor of the Story

City Herald, Eloise Thorson are making efforts to improve their downtown and spur investment in the area. Eloise and the Story City Herald received a Main Street Challenge Grant in 2003 to reclaim their old downtown location. In 1987, the building that had housed the Story City Herald was deemed unsafe for occupancy and demolished. Receipt of the \$25,000 Main Street Challenge Grant was the true catalyst to the reestablishment of the Story City Herald in its original location.

This positive change is causing more positive change, as vacancies in Story City's downtown are being filled and more building owners are taking interest in improving the look of their downtown. Community pride in the downtown is returning. Since becoming a Main Street Iowa Community in November of 2004, Story City's downtown has seen over \$4 million in private investment, as well as a net gain of 16 businesses and 46 jobs.

Eloise Thorson and the Main Street Challenge Grant gave a great deal back to the community by replacing a long vacant building lot with a magnificent piece of architecture, gracing Story City's “main” street. The community pride in this project is evident as pedestrians walk along Broad Street and stop to show off this new construction to visitors and tourists. Residents are proud to have this century-old business located back in the downtown district, renewing faith in the future of Story City.

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This project is a shining example of new construction and a catalyst for future projects. When people see one of the anchors of Main Street being renovated or expanded, this can change the whole psychology of a town or community. It offers hope. It serves as a catalyst for a far-reaching ripple effect of positive changes.

So I congratulate Eloise Thorson and the citizens of Story City for putting together a winning proposal to secure a Main Street Challenge Grant. Their efforts to reinvigorate their historic downtown are setting a terrific example for other small towns across America, and for that, I salute them.●

#### SIGOURNEY, IOWA, IMPROVEMENTS

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